

Edge Feathering

Job Sheet

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC)
University Outreach and Extension – The School of Natural Resources

DENSE SHRUBBY COVER IS IMPORTANT FOR QUAIL SURVIVAL

PURPOSE:

Quail need dense “shrubby” cover on a daily basis. Without this habitat component, few quail will be present. Most field edges are abrupt changes from grass or crops to mature trees. Quail habitat can be enhanced around a field edge by creating a gradual transition zone, consisting of “wildlife friendly” grasses/legumes and shrubs. Edge feathering can create high quality shrubby habitats that are beneficial for quail.

SPECIFICATIONS:

- ❑ Provide 1/10 acre of shrubs for every 10-40 acres managed for quail. These shrub areas should potentially have a covey for each patch of shrubs, if all the other components of quail habitat are present within 100 yards of the shrubs.
- ❑ Cut all large trees within 30 feet of the edge. Treat stumps with an approved herbicide. Leave native shrubs like dogwood or plum. You can drop the trees and let them lie, cut the logs for firewood or build brushpiles for rabbits. Within one year, a variety of shrubs, vines, and seed-producing plants will be growing and providing cover for quail and other wildlife. Drop trees parallel to the fenceline/field edge.
- ❑ Edges treated for quail habitat need to be at least 50 feet long and spaced at least every 300 feet along the edge of fields.
- ❑ If sod-forming grass is present, kill it with an approved contact herbicide before cutting trees. This provides good growing conditions for annual food plants and shrubs.



BEFORE



AFTER

MAINTENANCE:

- ❑ Exclude livestock from edge feathered areas.
- ❑ Use herbicides to suppress invasive vegetation and to control noxious weeds.

PRIMARY HABITAT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Provide natural cover sources for quail and other wildlife.

Consult with NRCS or MDC wildlife biologists and private land conservationists, or University Extension for additional recommendations.

COMMENTS

LANDOWNER_____ **Field No.**_____ **Farm No.**_____ **Tract No.**_____

CONTACT:



DATE:

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